

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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Medical Aid.	1
Bible Distribution	2
Growing Pains.	2
Oratorio "Job" Completed	3
Aid For Handicapped.	4
One More Accreditation	4

MEDICAL AID

The Japan Christian Medical Association has become comparatively well-known abroad for its medical aid to Nepal, Taiwan and Indonesia, and through the individual and combined efforts of its members is also becoming an increasingly influential factor in the improvement of medical education and treatment in Japan.

Contributing to the development of its work and image in Japan, as well as serving as a liaison organ for its membership, is the Association's monthly, Japanese publication IGAKU TO FUKUIN (Medicine and the Gospel), first published in 1945.

The December, 1965 issue was dedicated as a memorial to Dr. Schweitzer, with whom the JCMA has had direct relations and whose spirit of service the JCMA attempts to practice. The publication included such articles as "The Faith of Dr. Schweitzer;" "Reverence for Life;" "Learning From His Work;" and recollections of visits with Dr. Schweitzer by members of the JCMA.

The January, 1966 issue contained general introductions to 39 members of the Association, their philosophy of Christian Medical Work, their hopes and plans for future service, their favorite scripture verses, and other interesting information.

The February, 1966 issue featured an article on a plea for increased medical aid to remote areas, with plans for setting up base camps from which to work, provision for periodic research and study by the doctors involved, and consideration for advanced study by the doctors' children beyond the limited junior high level available in the more remote areas.

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

In response to a plea for aid appearing in the November, 1965 issue of YOROKOBI NO OTOZURE (The Glad Tidings), small, informative publication of the Japan Home Bible League, substantial contributions were received during December to cover the deficits which had accumulated during the past year. However, more gifts are required to meet the continued requests for Scriptures which come to the League's office.

More than 1,300 copies of the evangelistic YOROKOBI NO OTOZURE are distributed every month and include Bible studies and articles by or concerning people who have found new life in Christ through a reading of the Bible. If increased funds are not available, the publication of this vital paper will have to be discontinued, according to a Board of Director's decision.

Overhead costs of maintaining the work of the League are always kept at an absolute minimum with almost all of the contributed funds being used to purchase Scriptures which are placed free of charge in homes which request and promise to read them. A personal follow-up program is faithfully adhered to. Almost 400,000 Scriptures and Scripture portions have been placed since the work of the League was initiated 15 years ago.

The League was first established as an arm of the World Home Bible League with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. However, due to some policy differences, the relation was discontinued, and for the past few years the Japan Home Bible League has been operating entirely on funds raised by the Japan League.

Contributions may be sent directly to the Japan Home Bible League, Bible House, 4-chome, Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan

GROWING PAINS

The vanguard of the post war "baby boom" has reached the college level, accentuating old problems.

Tensions, created by the pressure of entrance examinations among other things, are being brought to the breaking point by the applicants' awareness of the odds against successful completion of tests this year.

The Education Ministry has announced plans to establish clinics at four state universities to aid students suffering nervous break-downs; allocating about \$150,000 for this purpose. According to the Ministry, one out of four college students, who either withdrew or were absent for long periods because of poor health during the past year, was emotionally disturbed.

Four out of every ten taking college or university entrance tests this year will fail, giving rise to estimates that about 240,000 young men and women about twice the annual average - will be frustrated in their hopes for advanced study.

However, it is expected, note Education Ministry officials, that there will be the illegal, but implicitly approved, enrollment of students in excess of the approved capacity at the many private institutions which enroll about 70% of all students on this level. It is customary for almost all private schools to admit from 50 - 70 percent more students than their capacity as approved by the Ministry resulting in crowded classrooms--in some case admitting more students than there are available desks--and attendant problems such as poor instruction. Also involved in this unfortunate practice are most of the Christian schools in Japan.

The private schools, in most cases, rationalize this procedure by saying they need the extra income to meet rising costs of building, equipment, and teachers' salaries. However, with spiraling costs, even such packing of classrooms is not sufficient. Therefore, an average 15% increase, in tuition and school facilities expansion and maintenance charges, is expected this year among 60 - 70% of the private universities.

Militant, minority student groups, usually committed to political struggle activity, oppose such proposed increases in fees, utilizing the situation to create disturbances and organize boycotts in their efforts to gain more support among the student body, which is then directed against the administration in an attempt to gain a greater degree of student "self-rule". All of this is part of a nation-wide pattern of organized assertion of student autonomy versus administrative authority. More than 20 major campus boycotts and disturbances were reported in 1965.

A six-day boycott, initiated by a minority group of students during the last part of December, 1965 at International Christian University, was successfully terminated by patient persuasion on the part of the faculty; the small student body and favorable student-teacher ratio making possible a continuation of dialogue.

However, a month-long strike at Waseda University, one of the larger private universities in Japan with an enrollment of 39,000, could not be broken without finally resorting to police aid in forcing the students out of administration buildings which had been taken over and barricaded by about a thousand students.

ORATORIO "JOB" COMPLETED

Mr. Seigi Abe, 74, composer of the melody for the well-known Japanese hymn, Mabune no Naka ni (In a lowly Manger Born), recently completed writing his oratorio "Job" on which he had initiated work 35 years ago.

The theme tune of the sacred composition is the same as Mabune no Naka ni, as is the melody of the final great chorus "Jehovah gives; Jehovah takes away; Blessed be the name of the Jehovah."

At the age of four, Abe accompanied his older brother to the northern island of Hokkaido as pioneer farmers, and there suffered considerable from the cold and lack of farming experience. Completing primary school, Abe left, by himself, for Sendai to attend and graduate from Tohoku Gakuin Middle School. Encouraged by a missionary there, he crossed the Pacific to study music in the U.S. However, being without any aid from home and having no scholarship, he had to work his way through school in the foreign land. He studied voice, piano and composition at the New England Music School (translation from Japanese) in Boston.

According to Abe, it was during his experiences in the U.S. that he first became absorbed in the reading of the chronicle "Job".

A full production with orchestral accompaniment is planned for sometime in May.

AID FOR HANDICAPPED

The International Ladies Benevolent Society (ILBS), composed of more than 300 members representing about 50 nationalities, raised nearly 17 million yen (about \$47,000) during 1965 and donated the entire sum towards equipment for the physically and mentally handicapped, the aged, and orphans.

About \$3,000 was presented to Tokyo Kurumen the only home for seriously handicapped adults in Japan. (The Government does not provide for handicapped people over the age of 18.) The money will be used towards starting construction on a workshop.

Money for a microbus was given to Fukusei Byoin, the oldest leprosarium in Japan. Lack of transportation had prevented the patients from leaving the grounds for outings, etc.

A donation to Agape Factory (Church World Service Sponsored), where 20 handicapped workers cut and bind cardboard boxes, was used to purchase two conveyor belts and a binding machine to speed up an assembly line type of operation.

A gift of building materials to Sen-Shin-en, a probation home for boys, made possible the construction of a new building by the boys under the direction of a professional builder.

Funds were also given to build an outdoor relaxation facility in the exercise yard of Seishi Ryogo-en, a crippled children's hospital. This hospital had provided the inspiration for the establishment of the ILBS, thirteen years ago. It has now expanded to become the largest physiotherapy center in Japan.

The annual Cherry Blossom Ball, sponsored by the ILBS, has become a well-established social event in Tokyo, and is held to raise funds for the work of the Society. The ILBS sponsors concerts, lectures and other functions during the year to raise money.

ONE MORE ACCREDITATION

We must add another to our list of newly accredited departments and schools reported in the previous issue. Shikoku Gakuin Daigaku (Shikoku Christian College) has had a new Social Welfare Department approved with opening for 40 students beginning with the new school year which commences in April.

The school was begun in 1950, with its junior college receiving accreditation in 1958, and a senior college, with English Literature and Christianity Courses, receiving accreditation in 1962.

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